

## 2012 Action Agenda – Strategic Initiatives Process

In 2012, three strategies were developed, working with the Ecosystem Coordination Board (ECB) and the Science Panel. The intent of the initiatives was to set priorities for Puget Sound balancing ecological, economic and human wellbeing factors to focus on actions that make the greatest progress towards ecosystem recovery targets for the time and resources spent. The Strategic Initiatives help direct spending and resources, and guide the Partnership's work with partners to increase funding, seek policy changes, report successes and challenges, and educate and engage citizens in the recovery effort.

These initiatives were identified through a science-based assessment, which ranked each of the sub-strategies based on expected ecological impact. This sub-strategy ranking informed the development of the Strategic Initiatives. The framework and content of the Strategic Initiatives were developed collaboratively by subcommittees of the ECB, and the Leadership Council adopted the Strategic Initiatives as part of the 2012/2013 Action Agenda.

In 2012, the Partnership formed three working groups to identify important actions under the identified sub-strategies that are critical to achieve the initiatives. The groups used the *ECB Stormwater Vision*, *Governor's Shellfish Initiative* and the *Treaty Rights at Risk* to inform their work. The habitat subcommittee also considered four categories developed by the tribes including, Protect habitat with effective use of regulations; Improve incentives for stewardship; Overcome barriers to restoration; and Support science needed to track success.

In addition to these policy documents, the Partnership provided the following criteria, adapted from the Guiding Principles for Ecosystem Management in Puget Sound (included in the Action Agenda):

- Protect functioning elements of the ecosystem;
- Prevent irreversible harm by addressing threats at their origin;
- Prevent new pathways for existing threats to cause harm;
- Improve ecosystem resilience by restoring key processes in order to achieve both no net loss, and net gain, of ecological function;
- Emphasize actions with high certainty of effectiveness and implementation; and
- Consider the linkages and interactions amongst sub-strategies and NTAs – thoughtfully sequence actions, so that early actions remove barriers or provide information that enables subsequent work to be “smarter”.

The groups used two mutually supportive factors to identify priorities: expected ecological benefits; and crucial policy objectives that support a broad array of partners. The groups also agreed on three overarching needs that apply to all three Strategic Initiatives, including:

- Overarching funding strategy/actions for all Strategic Initiatives
- Overarching outreach strategy/actions for the all Strategic Initiatives

- All Strategic Initiatives should be presented in a watershed context

The Stormwater workgroup agreed that pollution from stormwater runoff is a legacy issue and identified 3 categories of actions in addition to the 3 overarching actions listed above: fix existing problems (C2.3); prevent new problems (C2.2); and source control (C2.4).

The Habitat workgroup identified 8 action types in addition to the 3 overarching which are important in achieving habitat recovery actions listed above including actions that: support local government in managing habitat (A1.2/B1.2); strengthen and improve implementation and enforcement (A1.3/ B1.3); protect and conserve ecologically important areas (A2.1/B2.1); implement salmon recovery work plans (A6.1); implement priority marine and freshwater restoration (B2.2); remove armoring & improve floodplain function (B2.3/ A5.1); protect and restore instream flow; and actions that prevent and reduce risk of oil spills.

The Shellfish workgroup identified 6 categories of actions in addition to the overarching actions listed above, including: protection (B3.1/C3.2/C5.3); prevention (C1.5/C9.4); incentives (C7.3); government capacity (C1.6/C9.4); restoration (C7.1/C7.2) & enforcement (C1.6/C3.2); and economics (C7.3). Some actions cross categories or fit within other categories.